

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Acts: The Continuing Earthly Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Part VI: The Ministry Of The Universal Church In Its Spread To The Ends Of The Earth, Acts 8:26-28:31

E. Christ's Use Of The Apostle Paul To Spearhead Worldwide Outreach, Acts 14:4-28:31

35. Christ's Use Of Others To Nurture A Humanly Fatigued Paul For Future Ministry (Acts 28:11-16)

I. Introduction

- A. "Burn out" is a real challenge in Christian life and service, for at times, heeding God's will demands all of our human resources, and that brings on fatigue that needs to be met if one is to continue to do God's will.
- B. As we will discover in the lessons before us, Paul was humanly depleted from the stresses he faced in ministering on his way to Rome, so, since God wanted him to minister after he arrived in Rome, Christ used other people humanly to nurture him to that end, providing us a lesson rich in application as follows:

II. Christ's Use Of Others To Nurture A Humanly Fatigued Paul For Future Ministry, Acts 28:11-16.

- A. The Apostle Paul faced great stresses, and had to exert great human emotional and mental energy in doing God's will in his trip toward Rome from Crete to the Island of Malta, Acts 27:9-28:11:
 1. Between Acts 27:8-9 while at Fair Havens in Crete to Acts 27:21 when the others on the ship had finally heeded him, Paul was forced to travel as a prisoner on a ship he knew was headed for trouble!
 2. Because of this situation, he was shipwrecked off of the Island of Malta, Acts 27:22-44.
 3. Once on shore, Paul had been led of God to minister to the island's inhabitants rather than mentally and emotionally recuperate from his difficult voyage, serving the island's pagan inhabitants for three months until he had been placed on another ship in the winter to set sail for Rome, Acts 28:1-11a.
 4. That ship had as its figurehead the twin gods Castor and Pollux, twin sons of Zeus and Leda in Greek mythology who allegedly brought good luck to sailors, Acts 28:11b; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 429. This emphasis on paganism countered the testimony of Paul had worked to those shipwrecked with him, the testimony that **God** had saved their lives in sailing thus far, Acts 27:22-24, 43-44!
- B. Regardless of this stress, Paul would not be able simply to rest when he got to Rome, for trial before Caesar awaited him (Acts 25:11-12), and Christ had predicted he would testify the Gospel in Rome as he had in Jerusalem (Acts 23:11), and both events required emotional, mental and spiritual stamina!
- C. Thus, while on the last leg of his journey from Malta to Rome, and even when he first arrived in Rome, Christ used other people to nurture a fatigued Paul so he could fulfill God's will for him, Acts 28:12-16:
 1. Paul was boarded onto another Alexandrian grain ship that sailed north, stopping at Syracuse on Sicily for three days before traveling on to Rhegium (today's Reggio) in Southern Italy before docking and unloading its cargo at Puteoli (today's Pozzuoli), for Rome's harbor was not then deep enough to receive such grain ships, Acts 28:12-13; Ibid.; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978 ed., fn. to Acts 28:13.
 2. At Puteoli, the Lord arranged for Paul to meet believers who were possibly evangelized by Jews who became Christians on the Day of Pentecost at Jerusalem (Acts 28:14a; 2:10), and they were allowed by the centurion who guarded Paul to invite him to stay with them for seven edifying days, Acts 28:14b.
 3. Paul traveled north by land, and believers who heard of his approach came 43 miles south from Rome to the Forum of Appius and 33 miles south from Rome to the Three Taverns to meet him, causing him to thank God for this encouragement and to "receive courage," *tharsos*, Acts 28:15. The verb form of this noun, *tharseo*, is used in the Septuagint of those in distress who were encouraged, *implying Paul was then nurtured from the distress of his past hard journey*, Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 430!
 4. When Paul arrived at Rome, though the prisoners were delivered to the captain of the guard, he was allowed to live in a rented house with a guard, a comfortable living arrangement, Acts 28:16; Ibid.

Lesson: *Though Paul was humanly depleted from the stressful journey he had faced en route to Rome, Christ arranged for him to be nurtured by actions of other Christians and even unsaved Roman guards so he could continue to perform Christ's ministry assignment upon reaching the city of Rome.*

Application: *May we not fret over the depletion of human resources we experience in doing God's will, for God makes Himself responsible to reimburse what we need so that we might continue to do His will!*